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ST. LOUIS RIVER. BY REV. T.M. FULLERTON.

The head of Lake Superior is about five miles wide, the shore forming nearly a regular semi-circle. The St. Louis river enters the lake near the middle of this bend. The entrance from the lake is about west, forty or fifty rods, when the river bends suddenly to the north, keeping its course parallel with the lake shore about half a mile, when the course is again changed to the southwest. Here the river widens out into a bay about six miles long, and in places two miles wide; having several small islands in it. The bend of the river, near the mouth, forms a peninsula between its north bank and the lake, about a mile long, and averaging about a quarter of a mile in width. It is a body of sand, producing only some small evergreen underbrush, and a beautiful grove of tall, straight, limbless yellow pines. On the south side of the river, there is a tract of several hundred acres of low land, a portion of which is similar to that on the north side, but much of it is swampy. The American Fur Company, previous to 1840, had a trading post here, about half a mile from the lake, but it was subsequently removed to Fond du Lac, at the foot of the falls.

The river, at its mouth, is less than a quarter of a mile wide, and obstructed by a sand bar, holding countless snags; but on passing this a few rods, brings the boat beyond the bend, into calm, deep water, in any weather. At the head of the bay, the traveler is in want of a pilot. From that point to the falls, the river is full of islands and fields of 140 wild rice, around and through which, there are numerous channels. The inexperienced may row several miles, and find himself at the head of a bay or cove, and be under the necessity of returning to seek the true channel. From the lake to the falls, called twenty miles, the northern shore is bold and rugged, except in a few places where it falls back, forming a small plat of table land between it and the river or gives vent to a small mountain stream. The bluffs, on the south side, are similar to those on the north for several miles below the

falls; they there disappear. The Fonk du-Lac river, from the southwest, enters the lake about two miles south of the outlet of the St. Louis, and the valleys of the two rivers are merged in one some six or seven miles from the lake.

A few rods below the falls, a creek of pure, never-failing water from the north, forms a junction with the river. The west side of the valley, formed by this creek, is occupied by the American Fur Company, and the east by the missionary establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The whole valley does not afford above eighty acres of arable land.

The general face of the country around Fon du Lac, is mountainous. On the river, and small streams, there are a few acres of good soil in places, but most of the low lands are impenetrable white cedar swamps. Back of these there is usually a plat of table land, covered with hard maple, birch, basswood and other timbers indigenous to river bottoms in the southwestern States, together with here and there very large white pines. Still farther back, mountains tower up towards Heaven. The soil on some of these is good, but most of them are marshy. White pine and birch are the predominating timbers on the mountains. Large boulders are numerous, as well on these mountains as on the table lands and river bottoms

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About three miles north of Fond du Lac, a peak of one of the mountains towers far above all others. The only ascent, is on the north side, and is tolerably easy for a footman. The south side is a perpendicular rock of several hundred feet in height. The summit is a level bare rock. The stone, forming this peak, is unlike any thing else seen in the country. It is of a dark grey color, and so close in texture, that the united strength of myself and interpreter, could not break a piece of it by hurling it against the mass on which we stood. The beholder can scarcely resist the impression, that he stands on a pyramid in the midst of an immense basin, whose outer rim is the limit of human vision. Lake Superior, though twenty miles distant, appears as if lying at his feet, and stretching itself away to the east, until, sight loses it in the distance; and the river, with its islands, channels, and rice fields,

is all in full view, from the falls to its mouth. The writer has never seen another spot where such a comprehensive view of the vastness of creation could be obtained.

The falls of St. Louis river, are nothing more than a succession of rapids for the distance of about fifteen miles, except at the head of “Knife Portage.” At that point, the water falls about ten feet perpendicularly. Above that point, to the mouth of Savannah river, eighty miles from the lake, there are few banks seen in high water. The bottoms are several miles wide, in places, indeed, most of the way, and often overflown. But from Bond du Lac, to the above named falls, the water rushes through a narrow gorge, the banks in several places, being from fifty to one hundred feet high, and always crumbling in. In several places within two miles of Fond du Lac, they are composed of shale, sand, and boulders; the slaty shale lying in regular stratum, dipping several degrees westward on the south side, and equally eastward on the north side. Just above these banks, on the 142 north side of the river, an acre or more of trap rock mixed with copper, precisely like that below La Pointe, is exposed to view in low water. It has the appearance of having once been covered with a bank similar to those above described, which has washed away; and it was the opinion of the writer, that the same formation might be found under many of the hills around the falls. Up the creek before mentioned, a mile from the river, the same mixture of shale and sand may be seen in many places. The Indians considered this metallic substance in the trap rock, valuable, and in the treaty made at La Pointe, in 1842, they reserved this spot, stipulating that the trader's store, one mile below, should be the corner of that cession. The head chief often told the writer, that he expected to take out a great amount of wealth from the river, at that spot, as soon as he could get the means.

The first portage on these falls, is about eight miles long, on the north side of the river. It is over a very rough country, through several very swampy places, and is generally impracticable for horses, or anything that cannot walk a pole. At the head of this portage, canoes are used again for two miles, and there the “Knife Portage” is made on the south side of the river, three miles, to the grand falls, above alluded to. In high water, both of these portages are longer. On both sides of the river at the Knife Portage, much of the

surface of the ground is covered with masses of slate, equal to any hone for edged tools. They have the appearance of being thrown up by some internal revolution, there being nothing like order or regularity in their position, and the intervening ground being even.

Europeans who have seen this slate, allege that it is equal to that used in England for tiling. The supply, even on the surface of the ground, is inexhaustible.

There can scarcely be a limit to the amount of fish, pickerel 143 chiefly, that may be taken on the rapids during about three weeks of the spring. In the spring of 1843, the writer often saw a two-fathom canoe filled in one hour in the morning, by two men, one steering and the other using a dip-net. Both work the canoe up the rapids sufficiently far, when one stands in the bow with the net, while the other backs the canoe with his might, in addition to the rapidity of the current. From twenty to fifty large fishes are frequently thus taken in passing about twenty rods of the rapids.